INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

(By E. O. SELLERS, Acting Director of Sunday School Course of the Moody Bible Institute, Chicago.)

LESSON FOR APRIL 9

AENEAS AND DORCAS.

LESSON TEXT—Acts 9:32-43. (See also Prov. 31:10-31.)

GOLDEN TEXT—In all things showing thyself an ensample of good works.—Titus 2:7.

Step by step the Gospel can be traced, spreading itself, but "beginning at Jerusalem." Paul's conversion is one of the greatest evidences of Christianity. The two miracles of today's lesson are additional evidence that it is of God.

I. **At Lydda** (vs. 32-35). Caligula, emperor of Rome in A. D. 39, ordered his statue to be erected in Jerusalem that he might be worshiped as a god there as elsewhere. The excitement and conflict which arose in opposition to this sacrilege lasted for two years, during which time Christian persecutions ceased. Following Saul's visit at Jerusalem, and during this time of quiet, Peter made this tour of visitation. Lydda (modern Ludd) is about twenty-five miles northwest of Jerusalem. Here dwelt certain saints (v. 32) literally "holy ones," converted disciples of Christ, not ones of special honor, for all who are members of the body of Christ, are "saints" (Phil. 1:1). Here also dwelt Aeneas, "a certain man," possibly not a believer, but having great need (v. 26:3:2; 10:1, 14:8; 9:10), and of years standing (v. 33). Notice Luke, the physician's careful record. Peter must have seen many such, yet this man is one Peter "found"; he was evidently looking for him. Peter's pity was not sentimental but practical and his words powerful, for back of them was the Living and Powerful Christ. He knew who could work a cure. The long weariness is to be relieved. Yet those days of illness gave time for meditation and probably prepared the man's heart to respond in faith to Peter's words. Peter does not attract attention to himself, but rather to Jesus. His was but to be the instrument of the cure. The healing was a means to an end, for when those who dwelt in Lydda and Sharon (v. 35) heard of the miracle, or saw this healed man, it was to them a demonstration of the power of the risen Christ, and they "turned to the Lord" (v. 35). There is no comparing Peter with modern "healers." Peter's words and actions were a living demonstration, not for profit, of the power of Jesus in his life and testimony. If we of this day would show more of that same nearness to the same source of power there would be more turning of men and women, boys and girls, to Jesus, and more healing of broken hearts. Our power is in inverse ratio to our nearness to Jesus.

II. **At Joppa** (vs. 36:43). Joppa was the only seaport the Jews ever possessed for themselves. It was and is still a rather insignificant town, and now marks the beginning of the railroad leading to Jerusalem, 35 miles distant. No name is recorded of any of its rich or prominent citizens, only that of an humble woman. The record of her life, however, is inspiring (v. 36), and her name is a common one adopted by organizations of women. Like her master her life was full of "good deeds"; like him she was not ministered unto, but ministered. This is real greatness and it is open to all of us. Her name "Tabitha" (Hebrew), Dorcas (Greek), means gazelle, which in the East is a favorite type of beauty. This "certain disciple" was beautiful in life as well, for she was first a believer, then a doer. We believe in order to do, not do in order to believe. This woman is an example of the wise and capable woman mentioned in Prov. 31:10-31, a picture well worth studying in these days of the "feminist movement." She is a good type to be followed by church women, and by us all in the fact that her reputation rested upon deeds "which she did" (v. 36), not ones she was about to do, nor did she wait for some great opportunity of service. The life of Dorcas reveals one of the causes of the triumph of Christianity in the Roman empire. It was a source of wonder that those early Christians should so love each other. The reason why Dorcas was allowed to die lies in the providence of God. He loved his work and this recorded incident has served to raise up multitudes of other Dorcases. Her death also reveals that being "full of good works and alms deeds" does not exempt his servants from sickness and death, and that God evidently has other purposes in sickness than to chastise our sin or to humble our pride (John 9:3, II Kings 13:14). The friends of Dorcas were folks of faith, for as yet there was no case of apostolic power to raise the dead so far as we know, and it was now about ten years after the resurrection of Christ. Doubtless they had heard of the curing of Aeneas, and hence dared to appeal to Peter on behalf of the one they loved so dearly. Dorcas had built a monument with a needle, and in that upper room (v. 39) it was shown to Peter as a visible evidence of her life work. "Post-mortem benefactions do not count much with God."—Torrey. Peter followed the example of his Lord (Luke 8:2, 54), dismissed all spectators and "prayed" (v. 40). The way to revive a dead pastor, church, school, personal experience, or person "dead in trespasses and sins," is by prayer. Peter also did as he had seen his Master do to his mother-in-law (Mark 1:30, 31), and gave Dorcas his hand to help her arise.

This gave an opportunity for fruitful work among the converts (v. 41) and the enlistment of many new believers (v. 42), so that Peter abode in Joppa for some time in the house of "Simon, a tanner."

AFRO-AMERICAN CULLINGS

A few days before he died Booker T. Washington wrote to the editor of the Forum magazine suggesting the printing of an article dealing with "the definite, indisputable facts relating to the Negro's progress as a race." He inclosed what he called a rough outline of such an article, which, of course, was never completed. What he wrote is presented in its unfinished state in the current issue of the magazine.

First he presented striking figures to show Negro progress toward literacy. On emerging from slavery, he wrote, the Negro was not more than 5 per cent literate. The census of 1910 shows that the Negro has reduced his illiteracy from 95 per cent to 30.4. Contrasting the percentage of illiteracy among Negroes with that of other people, Mr. Washington wrote that "if the Negro had done no more good than lead Greece and Italy in the matter of literacy his showing would have been profoundly significant." His figures show the comparative percentage of illiteracy as follows: Negroes, 30.4; Bulgaria, 65.5; Greece, 57.2; Hungary, 40.9; Italy, 48.2; Poland, 59.3; Portugal, 73.4; Russia, 70; Serbia, 78.9; Spain, 58.7; Chile, 49.9; Cuba, 56.8; Mexico, 75.3; Porto Rico, 79.6; India, 92.5; Philippine islands, 55.5; Cape of Good Hope, 65.8; Egypt, 92.7.

Figures were not available for all of the Negro's wealth, but the census bureau gave the value of the Negro's farm property alone as $1,142,000,000, or $116.20 for each Negro in the United States. Comparing this with the statistics of the wealth of nations, Mr. Washington said that, with the exception of Argentina, whose money wealth is $135 per capita, the Negro's per capita wealth is more than twice that of any nation on earth. Negroes, he wrote, operated 893,370 farms in 1910, having an acreage of 42,279,510, and the value of these farms increased 128.4 per cent during the period of 1900-1910 alone.

As against an estimated value of about $1,000,000 of the 550 Negro churches owned in 1863 he set the value of $56,636,159 of buildings alone of the 36,421 churches and halls owned in 1906. This, he held, indicated not only economic progress but a continuing and increasing devotion to religious life. Starting in 1863 with about 2,000 business enterprises, the Negro has developed in some fifty years over 43,000 business concerns with an annual volume of business of about $1,000,000,000. Fifty-seven banks are operated by colored people with a capitalization of $1,600,000, and an annual business of about $20,000,000. Among indications of progress in the standard of living Mr. Washington cited the increase in the southern states alone of the percentage of homes owned free from incumbrance from 20 per cent in 1900 to 22.4 per cent in 1910. Another indication of the rising standard of living cited is the recent widespread legislation to prevent Negroes from buying property in desirable localities. Progress in health is indicated in a death rate of 3.9 per cent in ten years in a registration area embracing 19.7 per cent of the Negro population. Mr. Washington also quoted census figures to show an increased percentage of Negroes entering skilled industries. In general, he argued that when it was considered that the progress made in the last fifty years by the American Negro had been largely in the face of obstacles, it was great progress.

The late Dr. Booker T. Washington graduated from Hampton, and his work was the direct result of Hampton's influence. Maj. Robert R. Moton, successor to Doctor Washington as head of Tuskegee, who spoke in Carnegie hall, Pittsburgh, on the occasion of the Hampton singers' visit March 27, is another product of Hampton.

The hearty indorsement of well-known public men and educators has been given to the work done there. President Woodrow Wilson, William H. Taft, Theodore Roosevelt, Edward Everett Hale, Charles W. Eliot and many others have enthusiastically indorsed the work.

The Hampton quartet, known from coast to coast as the best Afro-American quartet in America, famous for singing of the plantation melodies or spirituals of the South, are the picked musicians from the big choral of 900 voices at Hampton institute, Virginia. Unique and inimitable, it is the only music of this country, except that of the Indians, which can claim to be folk music. These singers make tours to all parts of the country in the interest of the school, and during the past summer won the gold medal at the Panama-Pacific exposition in San Francisco.

Hampton is neither a state nor a government school, and must depend largely upon voluntary contributions for its support. It was founded by Gen. Samuel Chapman Armstrong in 1868, and was designed to instruct Afro-American youth in morality, industry and thrift, as well as in earnest and practical Christianity. Ten years later Indians were admitted to the Hampton school, which from a humble beginning, with two teachers and 15 students, has gradually developed into an industrial village, with over 1,300 students, 200 teachers and other workers, more than 140 buildings, and an instruction farm of 600 acres.

Hampton has sent forth over eight thousand young men and women, equipped to earn honorable livings as teachers, farmers and skilled tradesmen. It has imbued in its students a desire to be of service, and by their own homes, their work and their daily life, to act as examples and teachers to the less fortunate among whom they live. Many of its graduates have been tremendous forces in the struggle for advancement.

The New Orleans public school board has arranged for a summer normal school for Negro teachers to be held at Straight university, June 12 to July 21. Superintendent Gwinn has appointed Prof. A. Lawless director with the following advisory committee: Mrs. Sylvina Williams, Prof. J. W. Hoffman, Prof. A. Priestly, Mrs. Hattie V. Feger, Florence Lewis and Rev. H. H. Dunn, registrar.

An unusually strong faculty will be secured. Many applications are coming in from rural teachers and from all indications the attendance will be much larger this year than last. New Orleans enjoyed the distinction of having the largest summer normal in the state in 1915. New Orleans offers many superior facilities and advantages in its public and private libraries and the splendid lectures given by some of the finest educators in the country, who are instructors in the Tulane summer normal.

Pacific island of Midway is importing shiploads of soil in order to produce land capable of feeding cattle.

O. T. Jackson, founder of the Dearfield Settlement of colored farmers located in Webb county, Colorado, is a big man of broad views, determined purpose, and tremendously vigorous personality. His outlook is distinctly practical, according to the Southern Workman. He lives to put as many of his race as possible on their feet. At this moment he has a bunch of 250 of them fairly started toward independence. He is deeply conscious of the fact that colored people are of the soil in tastes and capacities; he is getting them close to the soil. In a word, he is, in a way and to a degree, a Booker Washington in conviction, purpose and endeavor. His band of settlers is the pluckiest lot of agricultural toilers of whom I have any knowledge.

"The first year there were only seven families in the settlement," says Mr. Jackson, "and we had only three teams. We managed to get in garden corn, melons, pumpkins, squash, Mexican beans and potatoes. We cleared a few acres of hay ground, removed the sagebrush by hand, the women and children wielding grubbers as industriously as the men, though not as sturdily perhaps; and after grubbing we plowed, harrowed and burned the remaining brush. Our sufferings were intense, as we had scarcely any wood to burn. Three of our horses died from starvation and the other three were too weak to pull an empty wagon. Now we have 20 teams, 28 cows and calves, 32 breeding hogs, 100 chickens, and all kinds of farming implements and tools. We have 595 acres planted to crops and 300 acres in native hay. Conditions point to a very favorable season and we hope to prove our worth to the soil and the community in which we live by raising a bumper crop, so that our success may be an inceptive to thousands of others of our race to come back to the land in some part of this great divide region."

With less than half her available farming land utilized, the United States produces one-sixth of the world's wheat, four-ninths of its corn, one-fourth of its oats, one-eighth of its cattle, one-third of its hogs, and one-twelfth of its sheep.

Louis Merriman, a Negro, who was born when George Washington was president of the United States, died at his home in Kansas City, Kan., a short time ago. Merriman was the oldest man on the United States pension rolls, and claimed to have substantiated the fact that he was born 121 years ago on the Sopher plantation, in Virginia, in 1795.

A cutter which can be kept strung on a ball of twine, ready for use, has been patented by a Maryland inventor.

A recent invention provides an umbrella frame or skeleton and any suitable number of interchangeable covers therefor, whereby a new cover may be substituted for an old, worn or damaged one, or a cover of one color or figure may be substituted for another, according to the costume of a lady carrying the same.

A dinner table reaching around the earth 16 times would be required if the inhabitants of the world sat down at a meal together.

In Woman's Realm

Tailored Costumes Continue to Be Conservatively Cut and in the Simplest Styles—One of the Best of the Prevailing Models Pictured—Alluring Handkerchief Novelties Offered for the Approval of Femininity.

By JULIA BOTTOMLEY.

While in other departments of dress extremes of style and more or less eccentric fashions present themselves, the tailored costumer is conservative. The tailor in his work seems to cling to a happy medium, a middle-of-the-road course. He takes cognizance of the latest ideas as to form and outline, but refuses to be beguiled by the extravagance of crinoline effects and a tendency to overtrimming.

The cleverest tailors are showing both two and three-piece suits that are very conservative. The models sent over by French tailors depend upon cleverness of cut, correctness of lines, and perfection of workmanship for distinction. Perfect fit and finish contribute to their fine effect. They ignore fussiness.

American women are very partial to navy blue—"the gentlewoman's color," as the French term it. Therefore a large proportion of model gowns are made up in this becoming and serviceable shade. The majority are dark in color, but many of them are brightened by vests of brocaded or plaid silks.

A model that is interesting from several standpoints is shown in the picture. The fullness of the skirt, a concession of the season's mode, is appropriately disposed in plaits. The coat is cleverly cut and easy fitting, with peplum pointed at the sides and back, and laid in plaits to give it fullness.

The sleeves are plain, with deep, slightly flaring cuffs. A girdle extends across the front and back, but is lacking at the sides. It is finished with a bit of embroidery, which is repeated on the standing collar.

A vestee and high turnover collar of satin, with cuffs to match, may be made in plaid silk if more color is preferred. Or they might be of pique or organdie, since they are separate pieces.

"The world is filled with a number of things," as is usual with the return of spring, designed to captivate the fancy and the favor of the beauty-loving summer girl. Among them are pretty novelties in handkerchiefs to be worn in the pocket of the tailored coat. After glimpsing them in the quickly passing throngs on the streets one is apt to run them down for a better view. In the shops their beauty is flaunted in the eyes of appreciative womankind.

There are small handkerchiefs of colored linen lawn, with narrow hems in contrasting color, to be worn with the new colored checks. They are plain and chic. Next in the favor of admirers are white handkerchiefs with colored embroidery, in a design that suggests the springtime in one corner of each handkerchief. Butterflies and bees and blossoms are reproduced in unusual colorings and with beautiful workmanship. Similar designs show conventional flowers in one or two colors with white.

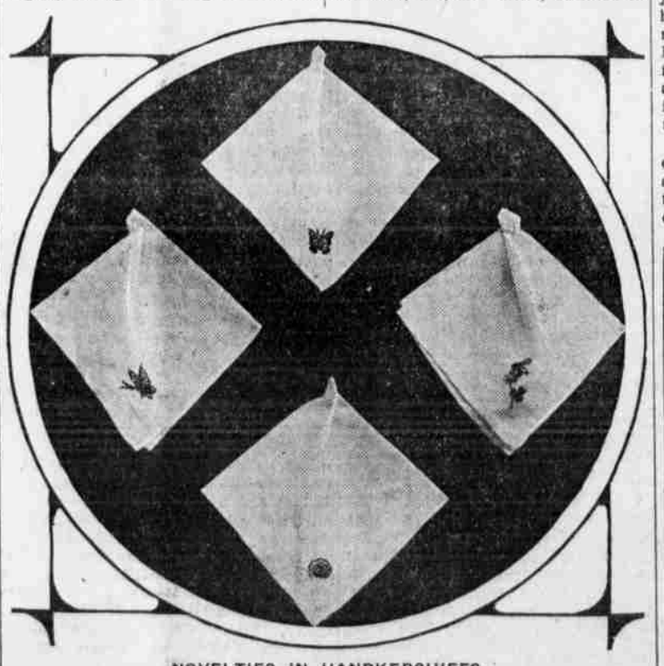
Four of these new ideas are shown here.

A springtime fancy appears in the clover blossom in pink with stem and leaf in greenish blue outlined with black. The bee has a black body with orange stripes and his gauze wings are merely outlined with the tiniest of stitches.

A butterfly with outspread wings is a marvel for its faithfulness to nature. It is in tan, black, white, and orange, and everyone has seen the same beautiful insect flying about. Another butterfly pattern shows gold wings spotted with blue and white. The body is white and it and the wings are outlined with black.

A conventional rose is shown in nattier blue, tan, and white, outlined in black. The work on all these is exquisitely fine.

NOVELTIES PRESENTED BY THE TAILOR.



NOVELTIES IN HANDKERCHIEFS.

Portieres From Leather Scraps.

Very pretty portieres can be made from leather scraps, known as "binders' scraps." The scraps of leather are cut in strips one-half inch wide and tied in knots, as carpet rags are tied. The more knots the more effective the portieres. A beautiful shade of green leather can be purchased at a bookbinder's for ten cents or so per pound. Six pounds will be sufficient to make a good-sized portiere.

Potted Plants.

With potted flowers regular attention is quite important. So many women are unable to keep flowers growing because they are overzealous in their care of them for a few days and then leave them during the rest of the week without a bit of nourishment. Geraniums and primroses are the most satisfactory flowering plants and last well through the winter. If dead leaves are kept picked off and blossoms removed immediately they become faded new blooms will appear very frequently. Changes in temperature, so disastrous to most potted flowers, will not affect these two varieties to any great extent.

Don't Put Oil Into the Ear.

In an address on diseases of the ear Dr. S. MacCuen Smith of Philadelphia gave an earnest warning against using blisters or poultices to relieve acute earache, as well as putting oil or anything else into the ear. Either may do irreparable damage.

Bows and Bands of Straw.

Colored as well as black straw is used for bands and bows instead of ribbon. In fact, this idea is already so overworked that it is probable that we shall be tired of it before spring comes. All these novelties are quickly run to ground, especially when they start so early in the season.

Collar Sets of Leather.

With the new vogue for leather trimmings and accessories of all kinds there is now being offered sets of leather articles which consist of stock collar, gloves and tie to match.

Painted Designs.

Little soft felt hats for children, in white and pastel shades, have, by way of trimming, birds painted around the crown. On the white hats bluebirds fly; on the tan hats robin redbreasts are painted; other hats have carrier pigeons, orioles and a number of other brilliantly colored birds. There are sugarloaf crowns and rolling brims.

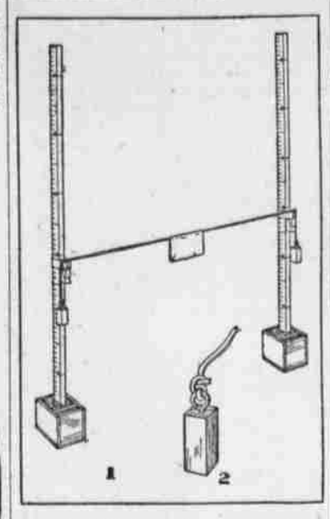
HANDICRAFT FOR BOYS AND GIRLS

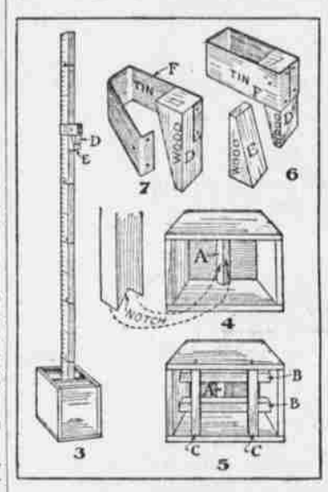
By A. NEELY HALL and DOROTHY PERKINS

JUMP STANDARDS.

Two poles six or seven feet in length are necessary for the uprights. Clothes poles will do nicely, and likely you can borrow a pair, as they are not to be damaged in the least, and can be slipped out of their bases in an instant, for use on washday. Two small boxes are needed for the bases.

Fig. 3 shows one completed standard, and Figs. 4 and 5 how the inside of the box bases are prepared to support the uprights. The upper end of a clothespole has a right-angle notch cut in it for the clothesline to fit in. This notched end of the pole is used for the base end of the jump standard, and fits over a cross strip A (Fig. 4), fastened between the sides of the box, in the center of the bottom. Cut a pair of sticks to fit lengthwise between the ends of the box (B, Fig. 5), and fasten them just far enough apart to permit the clothespole to slip down between them. Then cut the pair of sticks C of the same length as stick A, cross them over the pair of sticks B, and fasten between the box sides with just enough space left between to allow for the width of the clothespole upright.





It is not necessary to mark the height measurements upon the uprights. You can have an additional pole so marked, for the purpose of adjusting the cross bar or rope to heights desired. Still, it simplifies matters to have the poles graduated. Rule the "foot" divisions across one face and edge, the "half-foot" divisions across the face, and the "inch" divisions half-way across the face. Mark the "foot" divisions "1," "2," "3," etc.

The adjustable supports for the cross bar or rope are made of tin and wood (Figs. 6 and 7). To make the wedge-shaped blocks D and E first cut a block of wood about 3 inches long, 1 inch wide and 1 inch thick; then saw it in half diagonally. Cut a strip of tin about 1½ inches wide from a tin can, for the sleeve F, tack one end of this to the straight face of block D, bend it around the pole, make the other end meet the first end, and tack to block D. Make the sleeves fit loosely so they will slide up and down the poles easily. To fasten them at the desired point, it is necessary to slip the wedge E between the pole and block D, and push it up until the sleeve fits tight. Use a light-weight stick, or piece of clothesline with weight attached to each end (Fig. 2), to hang across the uprights.

Fig. 8 shows a boy rope-vaulting. If you have never tried this form of leaping you must do so, because it is lots of fun.

Looking Ahead.

My little niece had been made happy by being asked to be a ring bearer at a friend's wedding. A few evenings later we noticed her looking with a speculative eye at her older sister and the young man who was calling, and then she announced with a pleased expression: "I expect he will maybe ask me to be in his program, too."—Chicago Tribune.

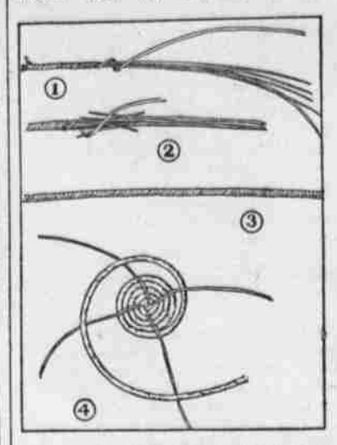
Optimistic Thought.

Wit is desirable, but wisdom more excellent.

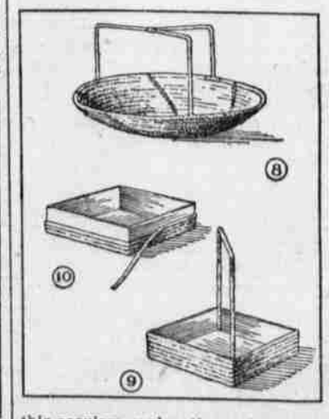
BASKET MAKING WITH GRASSES.

The baskets are built of coils of grasses, each made of several strands of grasses, and upon the care with which the grasses are assembled and the turns of the coil joined to one another, depends the success of the basket. In gathering the grasses, pull long ones, because less splicing will be necessary with them.

To prepare the grass rope for the basket coil, lay together enough grasses of equal length to make a thickness a trifle less than the diameter of a pencil. Then grasp these grasses in your left hand, and taking a long strand of grass, wrap it around the bunch from stem ends to blade ends, bringing the turns close to one another as shown in Fig. 1. When you reach the ends of the grass blades, take another bunch of equal thickness and splice them on to the ends of the first bunch, lapping the ends about an inch (Fig. 2), and binding them together with the covering strand of grass (Fig. 3). An 18-inch rope is long enough to begin the basket with. Fig 4 shows how to start a basket bottom. Coil the end of the rope over on to itself, to form a small button, and coil several turns of the rope about this; then with a coarse needle, threaded with the stem of one of the grasses, sew the turns one to another, using a plain over-and-over stitch. Splice other bunches of grass on to the rope as you need them, and sew each turn of the coil to the preceding one, as you build. If you haven't a coarse enough needle, you can use linen thread to sew with, instead of strands of grass. Draw the stitches tight, to make a firm structure, and, while building one turn upon another, pull in or spread them according to how much and where you want the sides of the basket to flare. When the rim of the basket has been formed, cut off the end of the coil, and trim back the grass blades to different lengths so the coil will bevel off on to the rim.



The basket in Fig. 5 has a handle, and the making and attachment of this requires explanation. A piece of wire—electric bell-wire will do—forms a center core of the handle, to give it stiffness, and several strands of grass are placed outside of the wire to add thickness; then all are bound together and concealed by a strand of grass (Fig. 6). To attach the handle, bend the end of the wire core around the rim of the basket, as shown in Fig. 7; and fasten the ends of the grasses to the rim, also. Fig. 8 shows a basket with another style of handle made in the same way.



Square baskets (Fig. 9) are not substantial unless re-enforced by other material. The best scheme is to use a cardboard box as a foundation, and to coil the grass rope around the sides (Fig 10), and glue it to the box. The inside may be lined with silk instead of grass.

Once Brilliant Capital.

Cordova, Spain, was a brilliant capital of the world with half a million population when the rest of Europe was clouded by the deepest lethargy of the middle ages. In the year 950 Cordova was considered the world's fountain of learning and science and Christian Europe turned to her for instruction in "everything from tanning leather to charting the stars."

Worth While Quotation.

"All words are pegs to hang ideas on."—Selected.